



Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

1400 South 19th
Bozeman, MT 59718

April 24, 2002

To: Governor's Office, Todd O'Hair, Room 204, State Capitol, P.O. Box 200801, Helena, MT 59620-0801
Environmental Quality Council, Capitol Building, Room 106, P.O. Box 201704, Helena, MT 59620
Dept. Environmental Quality, Metcalf Building, P.O. Box 200901, Helena, MT 59620-0901
Dept. of Fish, Wildlife & Parks:

Director's Office

Parks Division

Lands Section

FWP Commissioners

Wildlife Division

Design & Construction

Legal Unit

Fisheries Division

MT Historical Society, State Historic Preservation Office, P.O. Box 201202, Helena, MT 59620-1201

Montana State Parks Association, P.O. Box 699, Billings, MT 59103

Montana State Library, 1515 E. Sixth Avenue, P.O. Box 201800, Helena, MT 59620

James Jensen, Montana Environmental Information Center, P.O. Box 1184, Helena, MT 59624

Janet Ellis, Montana Audubon Council, P.O. Box 595, Helena, MT 59624

George Ochenski, P.O. Box 689, Helena, MT 59624

Beaverhead County Commissioners

Jerry DiMarco, P.O. Box 1571, Bozeman, MT 59771-1571

Montana Wildlife Federation, P.O. Box 1175, Helena, MT 59624

Wayne Hurst, P.O. Box 728, Libby, MT 59923

Glenn Hockett, Gallatin Wildlife Association, 745 Doane Road, Bozeman, MT 59715

Tom Sather, Headwaters Fish & Game Association, P.O. Box 1941, Bozeman, MT 59771-1941

Perry Backus, 65 Redtail, Dillon, MT 59725

John Gatchell, Montana Wilderness Association, P.O. Box 635, Helena, MT 59624

William Fairhurst, Public Lands Access Association, Box 247, Three Forks, MT 59752

Jack Atcheson, State Lands Coalition, 3210 Ottawa Street, Butte, MT 59701

Scott McMillion, P.O. Box 1226, Livingston, MT 59047

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen:

This is a decision notice which has been prepared by Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) for the proposal to acquire a new fishing access in the form of a 14.27 acre property along **Blacktail Deer Creek** within the city limits of Dillon, MT (**Beaverhead County**). This acquisition was proposed to occur via private donation of the land to FWP for the purpose of providing fishing access in an urban setting.

Public comment on the proposal was accepted from April 5 through April 19, 2002. Only one comment was received, and it stated full support of the acquisition. After review of this proposal and the corresponding comment, it is my decision to acquire the Swenson Blacktail Meadows property at Dillon MT via private donation. Any significant future development of the site will be addressed in separate environmental review. I find there to be no significant impacts associated with this action and conclude that an Environmental Impact Statement is not needed. The completed EA is an appropriate level of analysis. This matter will be brought to the FWP Commission for final approval on May 9, 2002.

Sincerely,

Patrick J. Flowers
Regional Supervisor



Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

Misc

1400 South 19th
Bozeman, MT 59718

Date: April 5, 2002

To: Governor's Office, Todd O'Hair, Room 204, State Capitol, P.O. Box 200801, Helena, MT 59620-0801
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Jack Atcheson, State Lands Coalition, 3210 Ottawa Street, Butte, MT 59701
Bob Raney, 212 South 6th, Livingston, MT 59047
Scott McMillion, P.O. Box 1226, Livingston, MT 59047

Blacktail Meadows

Ladies and Gentlemen,

An environmental assessment has been prepared for acquisition of an urban fishing site in Dillon MT (Beaverhead County) via private donation. Acquisition and proposed future management of the site are co-sponsored by Montana Fish Wildlife & Parks (FWP) and the Beaverhead Outdoors Association (BOA) to provide children's and family public fishing access in an urban setting.

This document is available for review from Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Region 3 Headquarters in Bozeman (994-4042) or on the Internet at <http://fwp.state.mt.us/publicnotices/default.asp>.

Comments will be accepted until 5:00 PM April 19, 2002 and should be addressed to: Blacktail Meadows FAS EA, Montana Fish Wildlife & Parks, P.O. 1400 South 19th Ave, Bozeman MT 59718, or
e-mailto: brucer@montana.edu.

Sincerely,

Patrick J. Flowers
Regional Supervisor

Enclosure

Beaverhead

DRAFT

MEPA/NEPA/HB495 CHECKLIST

PART I. PROPOSED ACTION DESCRIPTION

1. **Type of Proposed State Action:** Land acquisition to provide public recreational access for children and family fishing in an urban setting.
2. **Agency Authority for the Proposed Action:** Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) undertakes this action by authority of MCA 23-1-102 and MCA 87-1-209 defining FWP powers and duties regarding the acquisition of lands as state recreational areas and for the purpose of public fishing; and MCA 87-1-304 which designates certain fishing waters for the exclusive use and enjoyment of children.
3. **Name of Project:** Swenson Blacktail Meadows Urban Children's Fishing Pond and Blacktail Deer Creek Urban Fishing Corridor.
4. **Name, Address and Phone Number of Project Sponsor (if other than the agency):** Beaverhead Outdoors Association (BOA), Bob Hartwell, President; PO Box 1401, Dillon, MT 59725 is the Project Sponsor; Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks is the Project and Site Manager.
5. **If Applicable:** Not applicable; future development will be determined in conjunction with the Project Sponsor.

Estimated Construction/Commencement Date: None Planned at Present

Estimated Completion Date: Acquisition completed by May 31, 2002

Current Status of Project Design (% complete): NA

6. **Location Affected by Proposed Action (county, range and township):** Beaverhead County; City of Dillon; Blacktail Meadows Subdivision, in the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ and in the N $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 18, T7S, R8W P.M.M.
7. **Project Size: Estimate the number of acres that would be directly affected that are currently:**

| <u>Acres</u> | | <u>Acres</u> | |
|---|--------|--------------------------|-----|
| (a) Developed: | | (d) Floodplain..... | 9.0 |
| Residential..... | 0 | | |
| Industrial..... | 0 | (e) Productive: | |
| | | irrigated cropland | 0 |
| (b) Open Space/Woodlands/Recreation | 14.27* | dry cropland | 0 |
| | | forestry..... | 0 |
| (c) Wetlands/Riparian Areas | 6.44 | Rangeland | 0 |
| | | other..... | 0 |

* Total size of proposed acquisition is 14.27 acres. Various portions of the property also fit one or more of the classifications in c. & d.

8. **Map/site plan: attach an original 8 1/2" x 11" or larger section of the most recent USGS 7.5' series topographic map showing the location and boundaries of the area that would be affected by the proposed action. A different map scale may be substituted if more appropriate or if required by agency rule. If available, a site plan should also be attached.**

See attached map and aerial photo.

9. **Listing of any other Local, State or Federal agency that has overlapping or additional jurisdiction.**

(a) Permits: None Required.

| <u>Agency Name</u> | <u>Permit</u> | <u>Date Filed/#</u> |
|--------------------|---------------|---------------------|
|--------------------|---------------|---------------------|

(b) Funding: FWP Fishing Access Site Acquisition Account. Costs involved are shared costs for surveying, and closing and recording fees. The actual acquisition is via donation, requiring no additional funding.

| <u>Agency Name</u> | <u>Funding Amount</u> |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
|--------------------|-----------------------|

| | |
|-----|---------|
| FWP | Unknown |
|-----|---------|

(c) Other Overlapping or Additional Jurisdictional Responsibilities:

| <u>Agency Name</u> | <u>Type of Responsibility</u> |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|
|--------------------|-------------------------------|

| | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Dillon City Planning Board | Modify Minor to Major Subdivision |
| Dillon City Council | Modify Minor to Major Subdivision |
| Beaverhead County | Subdivision Approval |
| Montana DEQ | Subdivision Approval |

10. **Narrative summary of the proposed action or project including the benefits and purpose of the proposed action:**

FWP proposes to acquire, by donation, about 14.27 acres including a man made pond and a riparian corridor along Blacktail Deer Creek in the City limits of Dillon, Montana. The site donors are Mr. and Mrs. Clifford Swenson of San Jose, California. The 1.82 acre pond lies between Blacktail Deer Creek and Pigtail Slough within Lot One of the Blacktail Meadows Minor Subdivision. Application was made to the Dillon City Planning Board and City Council to further subdivide Lot One resulting in the pond being located in a 4.74 acre Lot 1D. The 9.53 acre Lot 3A stream and riparian corridor represents a new subdivision of Lot 3 of the original plat. Approval of this subdivision was obtained from the Planning Board on November 29 and from the City Council on December 5, 2001 at public meetings. The generous donation is offered to FWP in the interest of bringing a fisheries management program to an existing pond and an urban reach of Blacktail Deer Creek, providing a valuable outdoor resource to the community of Dillon and maintaining open space and natural value within the City of Dillon. Because the parcels of land proposed for acquisition are being offered as a private donation, no appraised value has been assigned to the property at this time.

The Swenson Pond will be managed as a Children's Fishing Pond with immediate urban access via Blacktail Boulevard. As an urban Children's fishery the pond will be open for fishing to children age 14 and under, by law. FWP will provide annual plants of rainbow trout, both juvenile fish and mature retired brood stock, in order to provide for the fisheries resource. The pond was originally constructed as a gravel borrow but was shaped in a dendritic fashion and steeply contoured to function as a trout pond. The pond provides a maximum depth of 18 - 20 feet at full pool and is not connected, by surface flow, with either Pigtail Slough or Blacktail Deer Creek. The pond currently does not provide spawning habitat for the natural recruitment of trout as a basis for a fishery. The Beaverhead Outdoors Association has graciously agreed to function as the contractual Sponsor of the Children's Pond in cooperation with FWP. As such, the Beaverhead Outdoors Association, in cooperation with FWP, will plan future development needs and handle future maintenance needs on site. The BOA will likely seek grant funding and utilize fundraising methods to complete site development as needed. Likely site development components will include parking, restrooms, signing, and might also include fencing and pier construction. Further site development will be addressed in a separate environmental review.

The Blacktail Deer Creek corridor will be accessed from residential Dillon via Blacktail Boulevard. The 3,322 foot riparian corridor contains about 2,113 feet of stream in three separate reaches within the 9.53 acres of Lot 3A. Total stream length between the up and downstream boundaries of Lot 3A is approximately 3,322 feet. No trout population estimates currently exist for the stream reach. Limited fisheries investigations indicate that the reach supports wild populations of brown and rainbow trout, mountain whitefish, mottled sculpin, longnose dace, and white and longnose sucker. The stream is currently managed under the standard fishing season and limits for the Central Fishing District with the exception that the combined trout limit includes cutthroat trout. The 1999 FWP Statewide Fishing Pressure Estimates estimated 610 angler-days of use on Blacktail Deer Creek. Site developments such as parking, restrooms, signing, etc., will be planned in coordination with the Children's Pond to serve both facilities.

11. List of agencies consulted during preparation of the EA:

No other agencies were involved in the preparation of this Environmental Assessment.

PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

1. Evaluation of the impacts of the Proposed Action including secondary and cumulative impacts on the Physical and Human Environment.

A. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

| 1. <u>LAND RESOURCES</u> Will the proposed action result in: | IMPACT * | | | | Can Impact Be Mitigated* | Comment Index |
|---|-----------|------|---------|-------------------------|--------------------------|---------------|
| | Unknown * | None | Minor * | Potentially Significant | | |
| a. **Soil instability or changes in geologic substructure? | | | X | | Yes | 1a. See below |
| b. Disruption, displacement, erosion, compaction, moisture loss, or over-covering of soil which would reduce productivity or fertility? | | | X | | Yes | 1b. See below |
| c. **Destruction, covering or modification of any unique geologic or physical features? | | X | | | | |
| d. Changes in siltation, deposition or erosion patterns that may modify the channel of a river or stream or the bed or shore of a lake? | | X | | | | |
| e. Exposure of people or property to earthquakes, landslides, ground failure, or other natural hazard? | | X | | | | |
| f. Other: | | X | | | | |

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

- 1a. Increased recreational activity at the site could increase sediment delivery into streams or pond and soil compaction in riparian areas. This possibility is substantially mitigated by the fact that existing undisturbed vegetation remains to act as filters between paths or developed areas and bodies of water.
- 1b. Normal site maintenance should be adequate to identify new problems as they develop, allowing opportunity for re-seeding or other actions to circumvent problems if necessary and appropriate.

| 2. <u>AIR</u> Will the proposed action result in: | IMPACT * | | | | Can Impact Be Mitigated* | Comment Index |
|---|-----------|------|---------|-------------------------|--------------------------|---------------|
| | Unknown * | None | Minor * | Potentially Significant | | |
| a. **Emission of air pollutants or deterioration of ambient air quality? (also see 13c.) | | X | | | | |
| b. Creation of objectionable odors? | | X | | | | |
| c. Alteration of air movement, moisture, or temperature patterns or any change in climate, either locally or regionally? | | X | | | | |
| d. Adverse effects on vegetation, including crops, due to increased emissions of pollutants? | | X | | | | |
| e. ***For P-R/D-J projects, will the project result in any discharge, which will conflict with federal or state air quality regs? (Also see 2a) | | X | | | | |
| f. Other: | | X | | | | |

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Air Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

- * Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact not or can not be evaluated.
- ** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)
- *** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
- **** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

| 3. <u>WATER</u> Will the proposed action result in: | IMPACT * | | | | Can Impact Be Mitigated* | Comment Index |
|--|-----------|------|---------|-------------------------|--------------------------|---------------|
| | Unknown * | None | Minor * | Potentially Significant | | |
| a. *Discharge into surface water or any alteration of surface water quality including but not limited to temperature, dissolved oxygen or turbidity? | | X | | | | |
| b. Changes in drainage patterns or the rate and amount of surface runoff? | | X | | | | |
| c. Alteration of the course or magnitude of floodwater or other flows? | | X | | | | |
| d. Changes in the amount of surface water in any water body or creation of a new water body? | | X | | | | |
| e. Exposure of people or property to water related hazards such as flooding? | | X | | | | |
| f. Changes in the quality of groundwater? | | X | | | | |
| g. Changes in the quantity of groundwater? | | X | | | | |
| h. Increase in risk of contamination of surface or groundwater? | | X | | | | |
| i. Effects on any existing water right or reservation? | | X | | | | |
| j. Effects on other water users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quality? | | X | | | | |
| k. Effects on other users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quantity? | | X | | | | |
| l. ****For P-R/D-J, will the project affect a designated floodplain? (Also see 3c) | | X | | | | |
| m. ***For P-R/D-J, will the project result in any discharge that will affect federal or state water quality regulations? (Also see 3a) | | X | | | | |
| n. Other: | | X | | | | |

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Air Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

- * Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.
- ** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)
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| 4. <u>VEGETATION</u> | IMPACT * | | | | Can Impact Be Mitigated * | Comment Index |
|--|-----------|------|---------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|
| | Unknown * | None | Minor * | Potentially Significant | | |
| Will the proposed action result in: | | | | | | |
| a. Changes in the diversity, productivity or abundance of plant species (including trees, shrubs, grass, crops, and aquatic plants)? | | X | | | | |
| b. Alteration of a plant community? | | | X | | Yes | 4b. See below |
| c. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species? | | X | | | | |
| d. Reduction in acreage or productivity of any agricultural land? | | X | | | | |
| e. Establishment or spread of noxious weeds? | | | X | | Yes | 4e See below |
| f. ****For P-R/D-J, will the project affect wetlands, or prime and unique farmland? | | X | | | | |
| g. Other: | | X | | | | |

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

- 4b. Noxious weeds are a concern any time soil is disturbed. Increased use of the site could increase the risk that noxious weeds are introduced at this location. Risks are lessened by the fact that substantial vegetation exists to prevent the establishment of new species.
- 4e. Normal site maintenance will allow identification of developing problems and appropriate response. The Project Sponsor and FWP will respond under FWP's standard weed control agreement on FAS and the Region 3 Weed Management Plan. Blacktail Meadows Subdivision has an approved weed control plan in place with Beaverhead County.

| ** 5. <u>FISH/WILDLIFE</u> | IMPACT * | | | | Can Impact Be Mitigated * | Comment Index |
|---|-----------|------|---------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|
| | Unknown * | None | Minor * | Potentially Significant | | |
| Will the proposed action result in: | | | | | | |
| a. Deterioration of critical fish or wildlife habitat? | | X | | | | |
| b. Changes in the diversity or abundance of game animals or bird species? | | X | | | | |
| c. Changes in the diversity or abundance of nongame species? | | X | | | | |
| d. Introduction of new species into an area? | | X | | | | |
| e. Creation of a barrier to the migration or movement of animals? | | X | | | | |
| f. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species? | | X | | | | |
| g. Increase in conditions that stress wildlife populations or limit abundance (including harassment, legal or illegal harvest or other human activity)? | | | X | | Yes | 5g. See below |
| h. ****For P-R/D-J, will the project be performed in any area in which T&E species are present, and will the project affect any T&E species or their habitat? (Also see 5f) | | X | | | | |
| i. ***For P-R/D-J, will the project introduce or export any species not presently or historically occurring in the receiving location? (Also see 5d) | | X | | | | |
| j. Other: | | X | | | | |

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

- 5g. Site acquisition should not adversely affect wildlife or fish in the area. Levels of disturbance from human activity should not increase substantially over that currently provided via Blacktail Boulevard. Existing seasons and limits are deemed adequate to protect the fisheries resource from excessive harvest.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact is not or can not be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)

*** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

B. HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

| 6. <u>NOISE/ELECTRICAL EFFECTS</u> | IMPACT * | | | | Can Impact Be Mitigated * | Comment Index |
|--|-----------|------|---------|-------------------------|---------------------------|---------------|
| | Unknown * | None | Minor * | Potentially Significant | | |
| Will the proposed action result in: | | | | | | |
| a. Increases in existing noise levels? | | X | | | | |
| b. Exposure of people to serve or nuisance noise levels? | | X | | | | |
| c. Creation of electrostatic or electromagnetic effects that could be detrimental to human health or property? | | X | | | | |
| d. Interference with radio or television reception and operation? | | X | | | | |
| e. Other: | | X | | | | |

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):
Nuisance noise levels should not exceed those currently provided via access from Blacktail Boulevard. No electrical risk is anticipated.

| 7. <u>LAND USE</u> | IMPACT * | | | | Can Impact Be Mitigated * | Comment Index |
|--|-----------|------|---------|-------------------------|---------------------------|---------------|
| | Unknown * | None | Minor * | Potentially Significant | | |
| Will the proposed action result in: | | | | | | |
| a. Alteration of or interference with the productivity or profitability of the existing land use of an area? | | X | | | | |
| b. Conflicted with a designated natural area or area of unusual scientific or educational importance? | | X | | | | |
| c. Conflict with any existing land use whose presence would constrain or potentially prohibit the proposed action? | | X | | | | |
| d. Adverse effects on or relocation of residences? | | X | | | | |
| e. Other: | | X | | | | |

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):
The proposal should protect natural areas and provide for future educational opportunity within an urban development. The proposal does not withdraw land currently planned for development.

| 8. <u>RISK/HEALTH HAZARDS</u> | IMPACT * | | | | Can Impact Be Mitigated * | Comment Index |
|---|-----------|------|---------|-------------------------|---------------------------|---------------|
| | Unknown * | None | Minor * | Potentially Significant | | |
| Will the proposed action result in: | | | | | | |
| a. Risk of an explosion or release of hazardous substances (including, but not limited to oil, pesticides, chemicals, or radiation) in the event of an accident or other forms of disruption? | | X | | | | |
| b. Affect an existing emergency response or emergency evacuation plan or create a need for a new plan? | | X | | | | |
| c. Creation of any human health hazard or potential hazard? | | X | | | | |
| d. ***For P-R/D-J, will any chemical toxicants be used? (Also see 8a) | | X | | | | |
| e. Other: | | X | | | | |

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):
No human health risks are anticipated.

- * Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.
- ** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)
- *** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
- **** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

| 9. <u>COMMUNITY IMPACT</u> Will the proposed action result in: | IMPACT * | | | | Can Impact Be Mitigated * | Comment Index |
|--|-----------|------|---------|-------------------------|---------------------------|---------------|
| | Unknown * | None | Minor * | Potentially Significant | | |
| a. Alteration of the location, distribution, density, or growth rate of the human population of an area? | | X | | | | |
| b. Alteration of the social structure of a community? | | X | | | | |
| c. Alteration of the level or distribution of employment or community or personal income? | | X | | | | |
| d. Changes in industrial or commercial activity? | | X | | | | |
| e. Increased traffic hazards or effects on existing transportation facilities or patterns of movement of people and goods? | | | X | | Yes | 9e. See Below |
| f. Other: | | X | | | | |

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

9e. No vehicle parking is currently allowed on Blacktail Boulevard. The likely future location of a limited parking area in Lot 3A would necessitate City approval of a signed pedestrian crosswalk to safely convey users across the boulevard.

| 10. <u>PUBLIC SERVICES/TAXES/UTILITIES</u> Will the proposed action result in: | IMPACT * | | | | Can Impact Be Mitigated * | Comment Index |
|---|-----------|------|---------|-------------------------|---------------------------|----------------|
| | Unknown * | None | Minor * | Potentially Significant | | |
| a. Will the proposed action have an effect upon or result in a need for new or altered governmental services in any of the following areas: fire or police protection, schools, parks/recreational facilities, roads or other public maintenance, water supply, sewer or septic systems, solid waste disposal, health, or other governmental services? If any, specify: | | | X | | Yes | 10a. See below |
| b. Will the proposed action have an effect upon the local or state tax base and revenues? | | X | | | | |
| c. Will the proposed action result in a need for new facilities or substantial alterations of any of the following utilities: electric power, natural gas, other fuel supply or distribution systems, or communications? | | X | | | | |
| d. Will the proposed action result in increased used of any energy source? | | X | | | | |
| e. **Define projected revenue sources | | X | | | | |
| f. **Define projected maintenance costs. | | | X | | Yes | 10f. See below |
| g. Other: | | X | | | | |

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

10a. No adverse affect on local tax revenue is anticipated; FWP makes Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) payments to Beaverhead County for FAS annually and would do so at this site. FWP currently makes PILT payments in excess of \$17,000 per year to Beaverhead County. The estimated tax on the parcels is \$444.44 for Lot 1D and \$1,151.49 for Lot 3A at 2001 rates. Fees associated with a lighting district have been determined as \$232.20 for Lot 1D and \$935.68 for Lot 3A.

10f. Site administration might cost additional public services for maintenance and enforcement. These services will be provided from existing FWP budgets and programs. Additional assistance in site development and maintenance will be provided by the Project Sponsor.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)

*** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

| ** 11. AESTHETICS/RECREATION Will the proposed action result in: | IMPACT * | | | | Can Impact Be Mitigated * | Comment Index |
|---|------------------|-------------|----------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------|
| | Unknown * | None | Minor * | Potentially Significant | | |
| a. Alteration of any scenic vista or creation of an aesthetically offensive site or effect that is open to public view? | | X | | | | |
| b. Alteration of the aesthetic character of a community or neighborhood? | | X | | | | |
| c. **Alteration of the quality or quantity of recreational/tourism opportunities and settings? (Attach Tourism Report) | | | X | | | 11c. See below |
| d. ***For P-R/D-J, will any designated or proposed wild or scenic rivers, trails or wilderness areas be impacted? (Also see 11a, 11c) | | X | | | | |
| e. Other: | | X | | | | |

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):
 11c. The project will be visually discreet and will protect and maintain existing natural setting within an urban development. Acquiring the site is expected to increase recreational use in the area but anticipated use should readily be accommodated at the site. The project should enhance both the quantity and quality of outdoor recreational opportunity in the City of Dillon.

| 12. CULTURAL/HISTORICAL RESOURCES Will the proposed action result in: | IMPACT * | | | | Can Impact Be Mitigated * | Comment Index |
|--|------------------|-------------|----------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------|
| | Unknown * | None | Minor * | Potentially Significant | | |
| a. **Destruction or alteration of any site, structure or object of prehistoric historic, or paleontological importance? | | X | | | | |
| b. Physical change that would affect unique cultural values? | | X | | | | |
| c. Effects on existing religious or sacred uses of a site or area? | | X | | | | |
| d. ****For P-R/D-J, will the project affect historic or cultural resources? Attach SHPO letter of clearance. (Also see 12.a) | | X | | | | |
| e. Other: | | X | | | | |

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):
 No development is planned at this time. Any future development such as a parking area would be accompanied by a cultural review.

- * Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.
- ** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)
- *** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
- **** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

| 13. SUMMARY EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANCE | IMPACT * | | | | Can Impact Be Mitigated * | Comments Index |
|---|-----------|------|---------|-------------------------|---------------------------|----------------|
| | Unknown * | None | Minor * | Potentially Significant | | |
| Will the proposed action, considered as a whole: | | | | | | |
| a. Have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (A project or program may result in impacts on two or more separate resources that create a significant effect when considered together or in total.) | | X | | | | |
| b. Involve potential risks or adverse effects which are uncertain but extremely hazardous if they were to occur? | | X | | | | |
| c. Potentially conflict with the substantive requirements of any local, state, or federal law, regulation, standard or formal plan? | | X | | | | |
| d. Establish a precedent or likelihood that future actions with significant environmental impacts will be proposed? | | X | | | | |
| e. Generate substantial debate or controversy about the nature of the impacts that would be created? | | X | | | | |
| f. ***For P-R/D-J, is the project expected to have organized opposition or generate substantial public controversy? (Also see 13e) | | X | | | | |
| g. ****For P-R/D-J, list any federal or state permits required. | | X | | | | |

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

- * Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact not or can not be evaluated.
- ** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)
- *** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
- **** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW, CONTINUED

2. Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives (including the no action alternative) to the proposed action whenever alternatives are reasonably available and prudent to consider and a discussion of how the alternatives would be implemented:

No Action: FWP does not acquire the property

Abandoning the project proposal will avoid all of the potentially adverse but very minor consequences of acquiring this property and minimally developing the site. Future land ownership would be uncertain, particularly within a developed urban setting; FWP would not secure future public use of this property. FWP would not take advantage of a generous private donation and the interest of a local sportsmen's association. This opportunity would not likely occur again within the foreseeable future.

Partial Action: FWP acquires a portion of the property

Abandoning the opportunity to acquire the stream corridor would avoid additional future costs associated with ownership and maintenance of a limited streamside corridor and minimize ownership with an urban Children's Fishing Pond. This action would still take advantage of a private donation and local sponsorship of the project while providing an urban fishing opportunity for children, however, any planned future parking area for the Children's Pond would have to be located in Lot 3A. Future land ownership of the corridor would be uncertain, particularly within a developed urban setting. FWP would not be taking full advantage of a generous private donation, an opportunity that would not likely occur again within the foreseeable future.

Preferred Alternative as Proposed: Acquire both parcels of property as described

FWP would acquire both the Children's Fishing Pond and Blacktail Deer Creek Urban Stream Corridor, by private donation as described within this EA.

Discussion of Alternatives

Taking no action requires no dollar investment by FWP other than this preliminary analysis. It foregoes an opportunity, however, to acquire a valuable public resource at an extremely favorable cost. Failure to acquire the site would leave future public use of this land in doubt.

Acquiring only the portion of the property containing the pond (Lot 1D) reduces the dollar investment by FWP over time but forgoes an opportunity to diversify the urban angling experience available at the site. It also foregoes an opportunity to acquire and protect a stream corridor and wild trout fishery at an extremely favorable cost to the angling public and leaves future public use of the site in doubt.

Acquiring the site will secure public use of the land at a very minimal cost in a manner consistent with the current owner's desire to donate it for public use and maintain its undeveloped setting. The project, as proposed, will allow FWP to provide new recreational opportunities to the public in an urban setting, and limit development and maintenance costs with a willing project sponsor.

PART III. NARRATIVE EVALUATION, CONCLUSION AND COMMENT

- 1. Based on the significance criteria evaluated in this EA, is an EIS required (YES/NO)? If an EIS is not required, explain why the EA is the appropriate level of analysis for this proposed action.**

No EIS is required:

The EA Checklist is more than adequate to identify all major issues concerning this land acquisition. Based on this evaluation, acquiring this property and minimally altering the site for public use poses virtually no risk for the local environment. In addition, the EA process protects and provides public opportunity to review and comment on the proposed project. (See Below)

- 2. Describe the level of public involvement for this project if any and, given the complexity and the seriousness of the environmental issues associated with the proposed action, is the level of public involvement appropriate under the circumstances?**

The continuing EA process will provide a two week opportunity for public comment on this proposed project. Public notice of the project will be provided by publication of this EA on the FWP website and by advertisement of the proposed action statewide in the Helena Independent Record as well as local announcement in two area newspapers: The Dillon Tribune – Examiner and the Montana Standard. Additional opportunity for public comment related to this project was provided on November 29, 2001 by the Dillon City Planning Board at a public hearing and by the Dillon City Council on December 5, 2001 regarding the approval of the major subdivision of the Blacktail Meadows Minor Subdivision to create the parcels described in this EA. Finally, the FWP Commission will accept formal public comment at its announced public meeting, following the EA Comment Period, prior to making their final decision on this proposed project.

This level of public involvement is appropriate considering the small scale of the project, its low environmental risks, the low cost of the project, and the low likelihood of controversy or conflict now or in the foreseeable future.

- 3. Duration of comment period, if any:**

Fourteen (14) days following the publication of legal notice. Written comments will be accepted until **5:00 PM, April 19, 2002**. All comments can be sent to:

Blacktail Meadows FAS EA
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
1400 S. 19th Ave.
Bozeman, MT 59718-5496
Or e-mail to: brucer@montana.edu

- 4. Name, title, address and phone number of the person(s) responsible for preparing the EA:**

Richard A. Oswald
Area Fisheries Mgmt. Biologist
730 N. Montana
Dillon, MT 59725

(406) 683-9310



